

## GOAL 14

*Identify and enhance economic development opportunities for Big Pine Key and No Name Key that respond to the economic needs of the community and are compatible with the community character and the environment.*

### Current Conditions Summary

Since 1995 there has been a moratorium on all traffic generating development on Big Pine Key and No Name Key because the segment of U.S. 1 that passes through Big Pine has been found to have an inadequate level of service (concurrency has not been met). This has not only prevented residential development, but has greatly impacted commercial development on the island (as well as areas west of Big Pine). With the implementation of the HCP road improvements are scheduled to begin which are anticipated to improve the level of service beyond the planning horizon.

During the LCP process the community indicated that additional commercial development should be oriented to the local community rather than the regional or tourist economy. New development should be kept at a small scale to maintain the rural and suburban character of the islands envisioned by the community. Currently, Big Pine has a mix of locally owned businesses, franchises and national chain stores. Many of the businesses, such as the grocery store, the drug store, banks, and restaurants serve not only the residents of Big Pine, but also other areas of the Lower Keys.

With the lifting of the moratorium on traffic-generating development, there is now an opportunity for existing businesses to expand and redevelop and for new buildings to be constructed, promoting an economic benefit to the community. However, there are many needs that have to be addressed in order to promote positive economic redevelopment on Big Pine. Most businesses have frontage on U.S. 1, but some are set back so that access is difficult and signage is not always visible. Many areas of the roadway need maintenance, parking enforcement, and stormwater management techniques installed. The corridor enhancement plan has identified guidelines for improving the look of the corridor including addressing building design features and recommendations for improved signage as well as alternative access ways to make it easier to move between business sites.

Currently there are many opportunities within the corridor for individual businesses to expand and redeveloped if they so desire. There are numerous scarified sites that are either vacant or the buildings are under utilized. Employee housing is currently very limited and could be located on commercial properties which would then gain a density bonus for expansion of the commercial use.

## **Analysis of Community Needs**

### Retain Economic Viability

Because business development and redevelopment will be closely controlled by the limits within the HCP and Master Plan there is a need to ensure the economic viability of current businesses, community organizations, commercial structures and projected future businesses relative to potential regulatory impacts.

### Encourage Positive Redevelopment

A major component of ensuring economic viability is the need to encourage positive redevelopment of existing businesses and community organizations. Current impediments to redevelopment on Big Pine Key should be examined and strategies formulated to streamline the process and provide appropriate incentives.

## **Recommended Strategies and Actions**

### **Strategy 14.1**

Maintain and enhance economic activity and opportunity within the U.S. 1 Corridor Area.

*Action Item 14.1.1:* Inventory and analyze the characteristics of existing commercial uses within the corridor. Examine commercial uses for expansion potential in order to project the likely rates and amounts of commercial to be added over the planning horizon. This will help evaluate whether the H budgeted for commercial development is likely to be needed or used. Include traffic generation projections in the analysis.

*Action Item 14.1.2:* Use the results of the county-wide economic study to assist in determining future commercial use trends and needs into the twenty-year planning horizon. This information may be used to identify ways to retain the marketability of existing business uses and commercial structures within the U.S. 1 Corridor Area.

*Action Item 14.1.3:* Create a new land use district category called Light Industrial (LI) for the purpose of more appropriate definition and accommodation of existing light industrial uses on Big Pine Key. The Light Industrial category may be considered for parcels within the FLUM category, Mixed Use/Commercial (MC) that do not border U.S. 1 and are currently occupied by light industrial uses such as, but not limited to construction material and lumber yards, outdoor and/or enclosed storage, warehouses and distribution centers, auto and marine services.

### **Strategy 14.2**

Encourage positive redevelopment of non-residential development within the planning area.

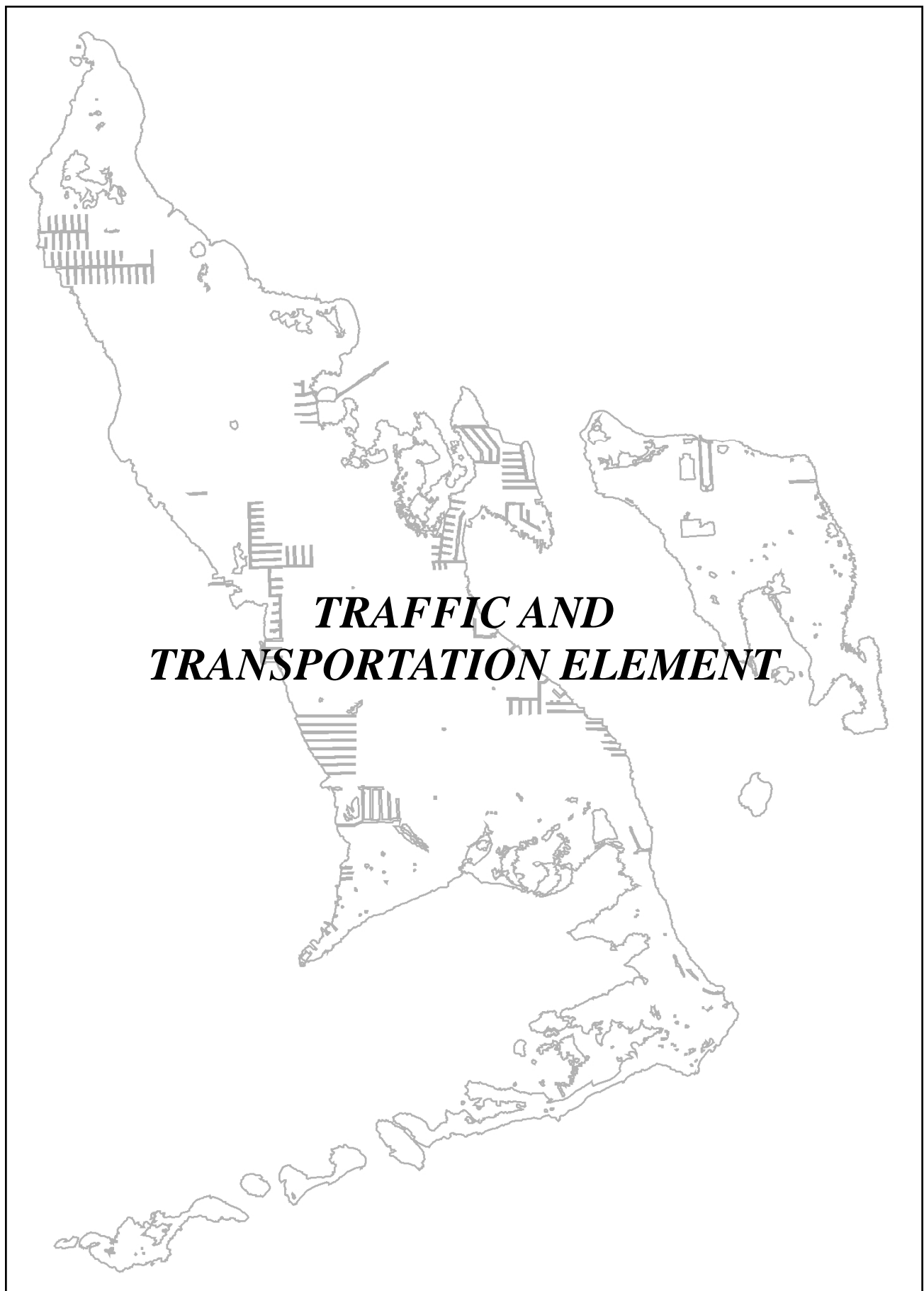
*Action Item 14.2.1:* Examine and revise the existing regulations regarding nonconforming uses and structures in consideration of projected commercial patterns over the twenty-year horizon, the recommendations of the Corridor Enhancement Plan features, and consistency with the community vision and the HCP.

*Action Item 14.2.2:* Allow increased allocation of floor area within the designated Community Center Overlay pursuant to the limits outlined in NROGO and encourage transfer of commercial floor area from within the planning area to the Community Center Overlay.

*Action Item 14.2.3:* Only require new design guidelines for new development, the replacement of an existing building or if 2,500 square feet is added. Ensure that new commercial design guidelines do not create a burden on existing businesses with potential for redevelopment.

*Action Item 14.2.4:* Provide incentives to business to provide minor beautification elements to existing properties. Minor elements are those which are not classified as replacement of additions of 2,500 square feet or greater, and could include but are not limited to additional landscaping, building façade improvements, and pedestrian-friendly additions.

*Action Item 14.2.5:* Explore ways of easing some financial burden of redevelopment such as county or state funding of landscaping within the Corridor Area as an alternative to business owners bearing the entire cost.



## GOAL 15

*Provide a safe, convenient, efficient and environmentally compatible motorized and non-motorized transportation system for the movement of people and goods on Big Pine Key and No Name Key.*

### Current Conditions Summary

Included in the final preferred alternative that was modeled in the HCP process was a plan for widening U.S. 1 to three lanes within the business segment of Big Pine Key and also a plan for future local road development including:

- Consideration of one-way access from the west side of the island to Key Deer Boulevard (north of U.S. 1). This was originally modeled in the HCP as the cross-island road improvement but after further consideration the county decided not to proceed with this project.
- Widening of the following existing roads by a total of 15 feet to accommodate the installation or upgrading of bicycle paths: Watson Boulevard, Newfound Harbor Road, Key Deer Boulevard, and Wilder Road.
- Widening of all other existing local roads by 5 feet, when necessary, to accommodate the installation of bicycle paths, stormwater infrastructure and/or sanitary sewer infrastructure.

Some habitat alteration was modeled for road widening but no alteration may take place within habitat areas of the Lower Keys marsh rabbit such as areas adjacent to portions of Watson Boulevard. It should be noted that, like capital facilities planning, the county's planning horizon for local roads is fairly short, at seven years, when compared to the Master Plan horizon. Although Monroe County does not currently anticipate widening all local roads, or even a large proportion of them, the ability to do so was built in primarily to maintain flexibility in meeting future public facilities needs, including sewer and stormwater collection systems and water distribution systems. The HCP commits to design coordination on future maintenance of roads in order to incorporate standards that will help reduce vehicular-deer collisions. The county has already incorporated the design standards into recent repaving projects.

### Analysis of Community Needs

#### Three-Laning of U.S. 1

There is a need for the county to closely and continually coordinate with and assist FDOT on design and implementation of future U.S. 1 three-laning.

### Local Roads

There is a need to develop and implement a local road and bike path improvement/maintenance program with appropriate design controls and traffic/roadside management in coordination with FWS. The county's current seven-year road plan serves as the basis for this program.

### Analysis of Local Traffic Movement

A two-way, cross-island roadway has been rejected as a means of addressing local traffic movement within the U.S. 1 Corridor Area north of U.S. 1 and west of Key Deer Boulevard. Further consideration of local traffic circulation improvements should be part of the Corridor Enhancement Plan process.

## **Recommended Strategies and Actions**

### **Strategy 15.1**

Maintain close coordination with FDOT on the three-lane plan for U.S. 1 in order to provide appropriate county support where needed, to ensure consistency with the Corridor Enhancement Plan and to ensure compliance with the anticipated ITP/HCP requirements.

### **Strategy 15.2**

Ensure that the seven-year local road/bike path maintenance and improvement program is consistent with the anticipated ITP/HCP and this Master Plan on an annual basis.

*Action Item 15.2.1:* Map all local roads on the GIS database and characterize by ownership, pavement status, and other features.

*Action Item 15.2.2:* Coordinate with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to identify design and roadside management techniques, including the appropriate location for their use, aimed at increasing human safety and decreasing wildlife impacts. The feature designs shall be integrated into the seven-year road plan where appropriate.

*Action Item 15.2.3:* Evaluate the need for traffic calming elements, both on U.S. 1 and county roads where increased development may warrant such elements for safety purposes.

*Action Item 15.2.4:* Limit new paving to roads or portions of roads that serve Tier III properties or public facilities.

*Action Item 15.2.5:* Permit maintenance of private easements in their existing footprint and elevation.

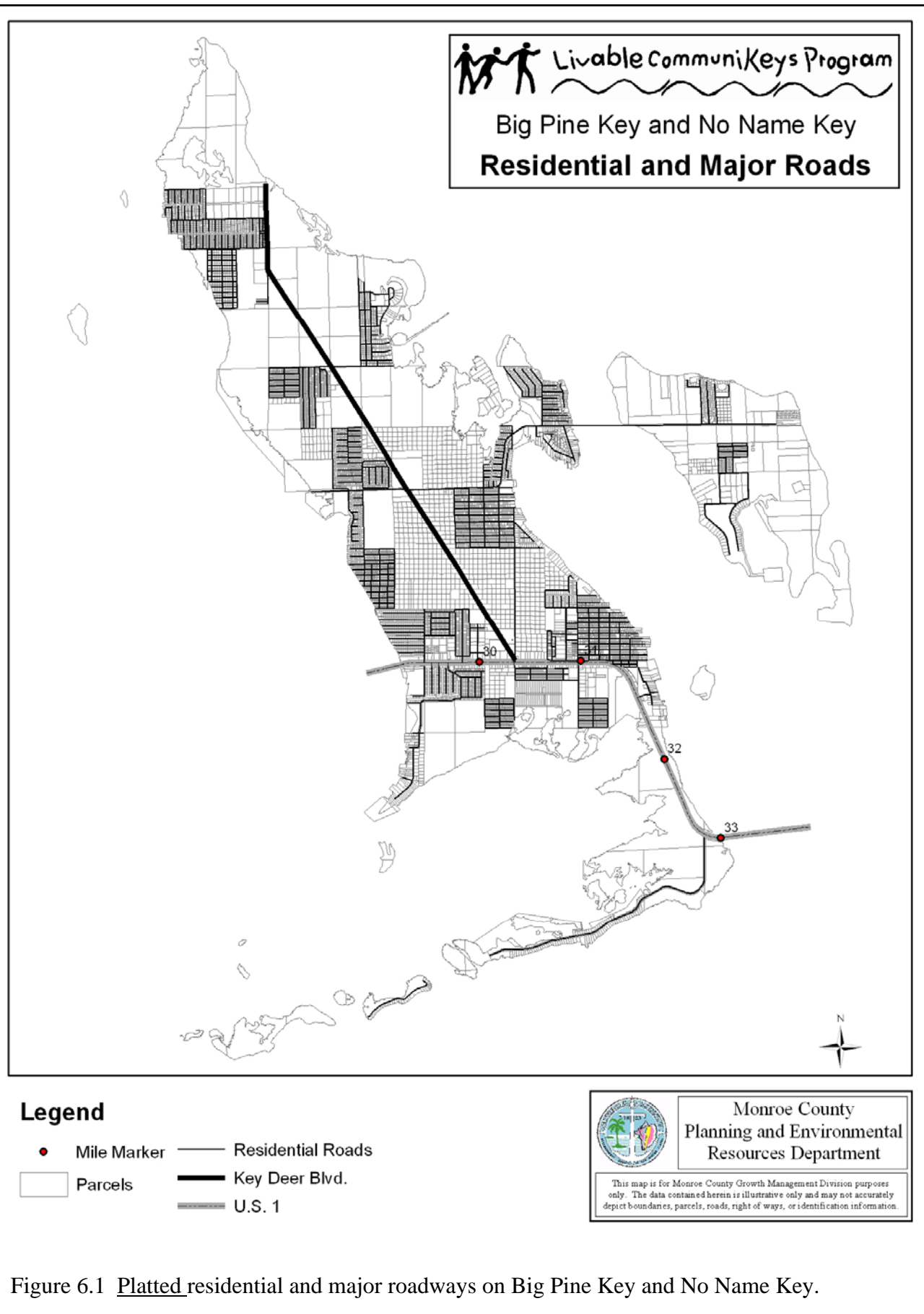
*Action Item 15.2.6:* Permit the minimum necessary road widening within existing rights-of-way to accommodate the following:

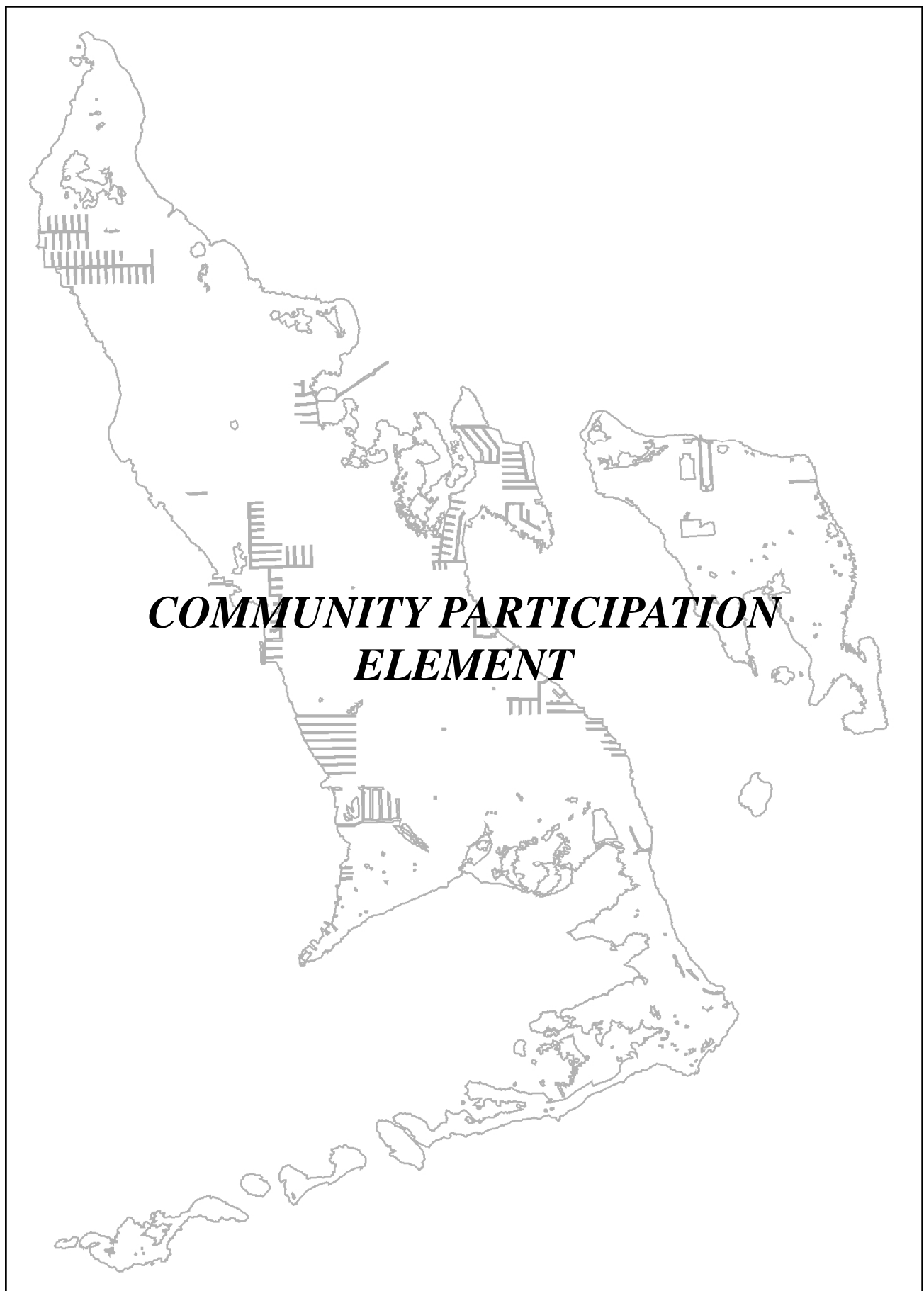
- a. bike paths and/or sidewalks.
- b. public facilities including sewage collection systems, stormwater collection and treatment systems, water distribution systems and other utilities.

**Fiscal Implications and Anticipated Capital Improvement Projects**

The county's seven-year road plan existed prior to and separate from this Master Plan. The county's planned roadway improvements were modeled in the HCP and included in this Master Plan. The only additional fiscal impacts introduced by that process are associated with the addition of wildlife management design and construction aspects to already existing road maintenance and widening plans. It is estimated that these management items (e.g., speed bumps, signs, etc.) add a small amount to the cost of road maintenance on average. The projected capital cost of the current seven-year road plan is \$1.5 million. Therefore, we can assume that the HCP/Master Plan requirements will add only a small amount to that cost for at least the next seven years. There are no other new fiscal impacts or capital costs to Monroe County introduced by the Traffic and Transportation Element.







## GOAL 16

### *Encourage community involvement in implementing and monitoring the Livable CommuniKeys Program (LCP) Master Plan*

#### **Current Conditions Summary**

The community has demonstrated their interest in planning for the future of Big Pine Key and No Name Key by attending workshops, community meetings and sending letters to the planning department concerning what they hoped to achieve in this planning process. Continuous community feedback has allowed staff to gain an understanding of the needs and desires of the community. The community interest has kept the project on track moving forward toward the Vision.

Four Livable CommuniKeys newsletters were written and distributed to all residents of the community and to property owners who may live in a different location. The newsletters were an outreach effort to the community, as a whole, to assure that everyone had an opportunity to become informed about the issues being addressed in both the LCP Master Plan and the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP). Each of the three LCP workshops was well attended by sometimes more than 100 residents.

Policy 101.20.1 of the 2010 Comprehensive Plan directs that the LCP Master Plans be developed following certain principles. Principle number Two states that the community master plans will include “a monitoring mechanism to provide accountability to the communities.” Principle number Five directs that “each Community Master Plan will include mechanisms allowing citizens continued oversight and involvement in the implementation of their plans. Through the Community Master Plans, programs for ongoing public involvement, outreach, and education will be developed.”

#### **Analysis of Community Needs**

##### Continuing Community Involvement

Mechanisms need to be developed to assure that the citizens of this planning area are kept informed and have an opportunity for meaningful comment on plan implementation, at a minimum including the H budget, community facilities, U.S. 1 expansion and progress on the corridor enhancement plan.

#### **Recommended Strategies and Actions**

##### **Strategy 16.1**

Provide updates to the community on all aspects of plan implementation and the status of public projects on Big Pine Key and No Name Key.

*Action Item 16.1.1:* Work closely with the County communications office to distribute information through press releases and the Monroe County web site.

*Action Item 16.1.2:* Continue to provide speakers to civic and service organizations to discuss LCP Master Plan issues.

*Action Item 16.1.3:* Publish and distribute a public newsletter on a periodic basis to provide community awareness and update on the progress.

### **Strategy 16.2**

Provide opportunities for public review of the annual development and acquisition report required in the HCP and Strategy 1.5.

*Action item 16.2.1* Present the report annually in a public meeting before the Planning Commission including the evaluation and demonstration of compliance with the total allowable H and the H of conservation parcels acquired for the purpose of mitigating H developed.

*Action Item 16.2.2:* Place the annual Report on the County web page and in the Public Library on Big Pine Key.

### **Strategy 16.3**

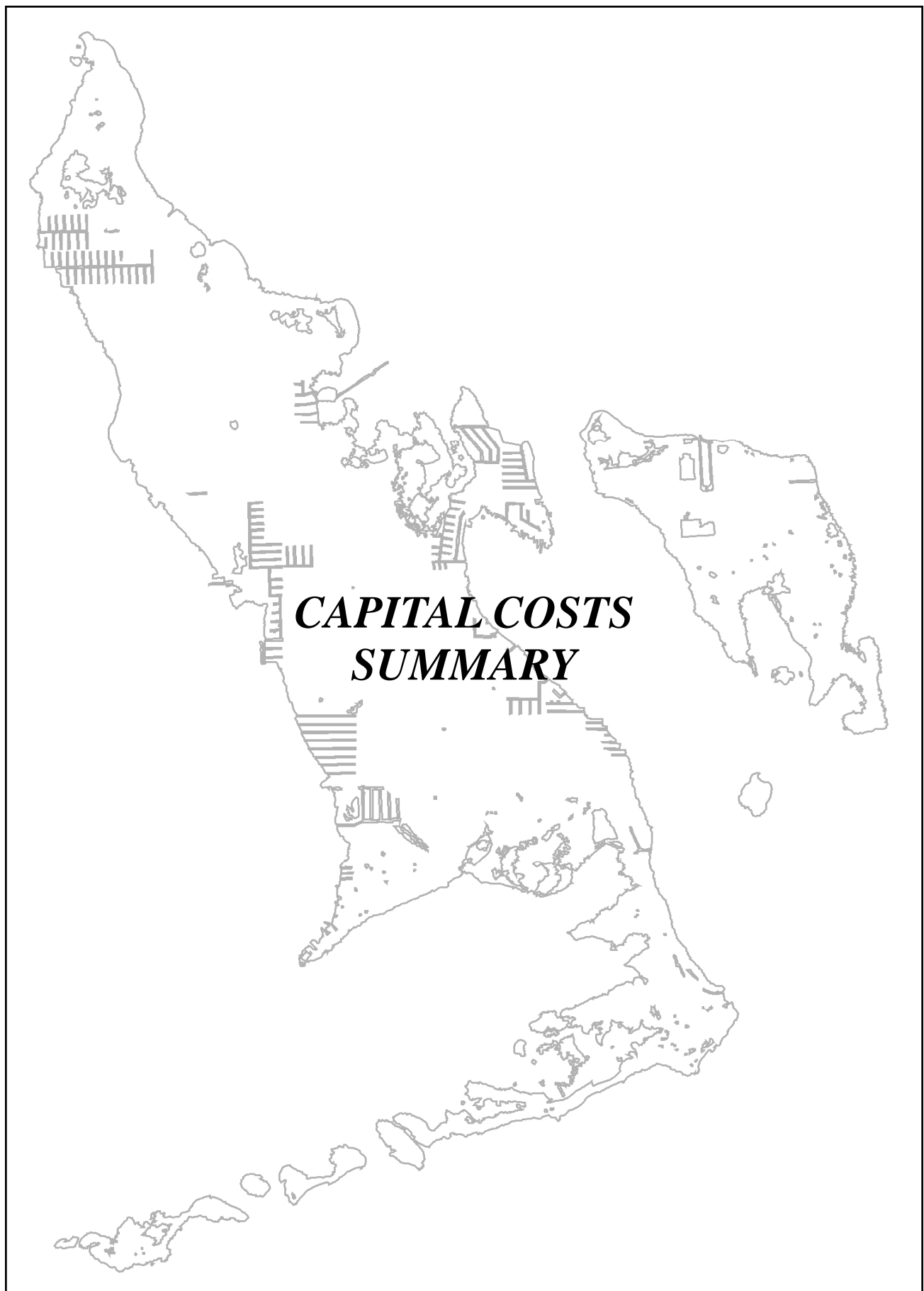
Establish a Big Pine Key Corridor Area Enhancement Committee to advise the Planning Commission on project proposals within the identified corridor.

*Action Item 16.3.1:* Appoint five to seven Committee members to include representatives from the business community, the general citizenry, and design professionals to serve as volunteers reviewing and commenting on plans for projects and improvements along the corridor.

*Action Item 16.3.2:* Specify procedures for Committee review of development and redevelopment proposals concerning conformance to the Architectural Guidelines in the Big Pine Key/US 1 Corridor Enhancement Plan.

*Action Item 16.3.3:* Hold all meetings of the Committee in a public format and advertise the date and agenda following the Florida “Sunshine” Law requirements.

*Action Item 16.3.4:* Support the Committee by having the planning department provide technical and secretarial staffing, mailings, advertising, and preparation of Committee reports.



## Capital Costs Summary

Table 7.1 below lists the estimated costs of the major capital improvements that are called for in the plan. Not every suggested project is included in this list (e.g. public offices or neighborhood parks) because many are undefined at this time and it is not possible to determine what costs may be involved. The seven year roadway improvements plan only extends to the year 2006. After this date the new cost estimates will have to be included to achieve a more accurate total cost over the planning horizon. Estimates were gathered from various sources including:

- The Monroe County Sanitary Wastewater Master Plan
- The Monroe County Seven Year Roadway/Bicycle Path Plan
- The Florida Keys Overseas Heritage Trail Master Plan
- The Monroe County Capital Projects Plan
- The Monroe County Annual Budget

Table 7.1 Estimated cost of capital improvements		
Project	Cost	Source of Funds
Fire Station Redevelopment	\$ 2,400,000	Infrastructure tax
Community Park Development	\$ 3,500,000	Infrastructure tax
Roadway/Bike Path (including stormwater management)	\$ 1,557,170	Impact Fees
Overseas Heritage Trail (including landscaping)	\$ 1,485,000	FDOT/DEP/National Park Service
Wastewater Treatment Facilities	\$ 35,550,000	Sources outlined in SWMP
<b>Total Cost of Capital Improvements</b>	<b>\$ 44,492,170</b>	

Table 7.1 also identifies the sources of the funding for each of the projects. Both the fire station and the community park development have been allocated funding in the year 2003 and are projects which have already begun. The roadway improvements only pertain to county maintained roads and bike paths and are funded through impact fees. The proposed widening of U.S. 1 will be done by FDOT, which has already allocated funding for the design of the project. Funding sources have not been identified for the improvements to this section of the Overseas Heritage Trail, however the DEP is actively seeking sources at this time. The Monroe County Sanitary Wastewater Master Plan outlines a number of sources for use in funding wastewater facilities including user fees and charges, bonds and loans, grants, financial assistance for low income individuals, and assessment fees. Some areas of Big Pine have been determined to be 'hot spots' and are ranked as 4th, 5th, 8th, and 9th in terms of priority in the Lower Keys. These 'hot spots' will be addressed after the current wastewater projects are underway and funding sources will be pursued at that time.

The table below estimates of the cost of reaching the 3 to 1 mitigation factor required by the HCP.

<b>Table 7.2 Estimated cost of 3 to 1 mitigation</b>	
Estimated land value (based on average cost)	\$ 6,185,000
Annual management costs: \$1,000 per acre for the first three years	\$ 810,000
Annual management costs: \$100 per acre after the first three years	\$ 459,000
20 year monitoring (\$5,000 per year)	\$ 100,000
<b>Total cost over 20 years</b>	<b>\$ 7,554,000</b>
Source: Habitat Conservation Plan for Florida Key Deer	

Mitigation costs will be shared by the county, the state, and the federal government. Much of Big Pine and No Name are included in the state's CARL program. When lands within the CARL boundary are acquired, the county can apply to the state for reimbursement for monies spent on acquisition. Additionally, all of Big Pine and No Name are within the National Key Deer Refuge and lands acquired which have significant value to the endangered species may be turned over to the US Fish and Wildlife Service for management purposes, reducing the overall management cost to the county.

Both the capital costs and the mitigation would cost an estimated \$52,046,170 over the twenty year period.

If purchase of all private, vacant Tier I lands were necessary, a preliminary estimate in 2002 indicates the assessed value of these lands would be approximately \$16 million. Purchase price is typically higher than the assessed value, therefore a higher number could be expected.